

# IGNITION 13

BRETT BARMBY

BORIS DUMESNIL-POULIN

FRANCISCO GONZALEZ-ROSAS

MARION LESSARD

ZINNIA NAQVI

ANNIE KATSURA ROLLINS

NAGHMEH SHARIFI



APRIL 19 – MAY 27, 2017



Francisco Gonzalez-Rosas, *Audiovisual Jungle: Latino Bodies and Exportation Fruit*, 2017.  
Video still (detail). Courtesy of the artist

# WAYS OF THINKING

*Ways of Thinking* is designed for anyone interested in exploring contemporary art and its exhibition framework. It succinctly synthesizes information on the exhibition's concept, the artists and the works featured. For the complete version of *Ways of Thinking*, please see our website: <http://ellengallery.concordia.ca/ways-of-thinking/current/?lang=en>

**IGNITION** is an annual exhibition that features new work by students currently enrolled in the Studio Arts or Humanities graduate programs at Concordia University. It provides an up and coming generation of artists with a unique opportunity to present ambitious, interdisciplinary works in the professional context of a gallery with a national and international profile. Graduate students work directly with Gallery staff to produce an exhibition that places an emphasis on critical, innovative, and experimental work, engaging in the exploration and consideration of diverse media and practices. **IGNITION** is of interest to all students and faculty, the art community, and the general public.

Projects selected by Shauna Janssen, Artist in Residence, Department of Theatre and Studio Arts, Concordia University and curator, and Michèle Thériault, Director of the Leonard & Bina Ellen Art Gallery.



The 13<sup>th</sup> edition of **IGNITION** features the work of seven artists. As a collection, these works were not selected to fulfill an overarching thematic. Rather, the exhibition provokes an engagement with performative, materially and conceptually diverse practices, inviting viewers to make their own associations with the kinds of experimental gestures that create immersive, cartographic, theatrical and photographic spaces for unexpected encounters between bodies and virtual environments, objects and storytelling, personal histories and fiction, the city and subjectivity, and more.

Collectively, each of the artists' works are tethered to broader intersecting themes. **Francisco Gonzalez-Rosas** and **Zinnia Naqvi** query gender norms and colonialism. **Boris Dumesnil-Poulin**'s interactive installation plays with the performativity of virtual reality. The preservation of cultural heritage practices and notions of im/permanence are the focus of **Annie Katsura Rollins** and **Naghmeh Sharifi**'s installations, and **Marion Lessard** and **Brett Barmby**'s work explore the systems of information and the circulation of capital. All the works respectively resonate with questions and contemporary processes of archiving, narrativity, and documentation.

Commentary by Shauna Janssen, curator invited to participate in the selection of the projects for **IGNITION 13**

## BRETT BARMBY

**Reception**, 2016-2017

From left to right

(1130 Sherbrooke Ouest), 2017  
(1440 Sainte-Catherine Ouest), 2017  
1000 Sherbrooke Ouest), 2016  
(Aberdeen Square), 2017  
(625 Sainte-Catherine Ouest), 2017  
(1 Place Ville-Marie), 2016  
(Place Desjardins), 2017  
(1200 McGill College), 2017  
(1250 René-Lévesque Ouest), 2016  
(1004 Sherbrooke Ouest), 2016  
3D printed plastic

**Summer Abroad**, 2016  
76 digital inkjet prints on paper

Courtesy of the artist

*Summer Abroad* is a series of seventy six drawings each representing a day at work as a messenger in Montreal. Contrary to the aimless paths of a *dérive*, my routes through the city are directly informed by the exchange of information and capital between major corporations. The series of maquettes titled *Reception* are miniature copies of security desks in major office towers, their reduced scale drawing attention to their eerie and near totalitarian designs.

- EXPLORE
- How the mapping of delivery routes diagrams the daily circulation of commodities and information;
  - The typology of the reception area: How the scale of the models permits a study of the power, fortification, and surveillance at play in corporate architecture.

## BORIS DUMESNIL-POULIN

**No Man is an Island**, 2017  
Teleportation device and episodic fiction performance  
Video projection, sound, camera, software, green screen, costumes and accessories

The installation is activated by the artist from April 19 to May 12, Wednesday to Friday, starting at 1 pm

Courtesy of the artist

A virtual island in a cinematic apparatus, with *No Man is an Island* I channel a strange, synthetic sense of engagement through storytelling and roleplaying. Its open-endedness is an invitation to participate. As the piece evolves the viewers and myself are embodied in the politics of performing an absurd and escapist fiction, entering a vanishing point that allows for withdrawal from everything else.

- EXPLORE
- The artist's role as both creator of and explorer within his own narrative and virtual environment;
  - How as a gallery visitor you are invited to project your own fantasies and share in the planning of an escape into a utopian world.

## FRANCISCO GONZALEZ-ROSAS

**Audiovisual Jungle: Latino Bodies & Exportation Fruit**, 2017  
Multi-channel video installation, colour, sound, looped  
Video projection: 8 min. 08 sec.  
LCD screens: 5 min. 23 sec.; 5 min. 40 sec.; 9 min. 02 sec.; 8 min. 27 sec.; 4 min. 56 sec.; 7 min. 34 sec.; 5 min. 16 sec.; 3 min. 33 sec.

Courtesy of the artist

*Audiovisual Jungle* is an immersive environment blending selfie sessions of Latinos with advertisements for Chilean fruit exports, telecom sounds, electronic music samples and screen captures of Google Earth. Through this audiovisual stimulus I aim to expose the tension between the globalized presence of fruit and Latino bodies, at once exoticized for white consumption on dating apps and facing social and political exclusion in the North American context.

- EXPLORE
- The double standard subjected upon Latin American bodies: visible when objectified as being sexually available and invisible when undertaking cheap labour necessary to the maintenance of a neoliberal economy;
  - How mobile technology is used as a frame wherein images of racial, gender, and sexual stereotypes are juxtaposed with those of the global circulation of produce.

## MARION LESSARD

**Cartography of the Odonymic Essence of Parc-Extension**, 2016

Rue Jarry, 2016  
Rue Hutchison, 2016  
Rue Saint-Roch, 2016  
Rue de Liège, 2016  
Pencil on archival paper, text on paper and vinyl lettering

Courtesy of the artist

With this series of drawings and texts Marion Lessard reinvents the history and nomenclatural imaginary of the Park Extension neighbourhood by way of a heuristic cartography in which its elements and structure appear at once illogical and inexplicably well-measured. The irruption of fiction and improprieties within the scientific authority connoted by the map and diagram bring to the fore a human dimension, a subjective and poetic experience of a locale, that draws attention to the reader-spectator's role in the discernment of information delivered through forms that carry all the signs of objectivity.

- EXPLORE
- How the associations between proper names generate poetic and semantic slippages to reveal hidden elements and possible spaces within the mapped space of the city;
  - The act of decoding the artist's referential language by means of the bilingual yet distinct texts.

## ZINNIA NAQVI

**Dear Nani**, 2017  
Digital inkjet prints, silver gelatin prints, digital prints on adhesive vinyl, vinyl lettering, wooden shelf and book

From left to right

*Nani in Garden*, 2017  
Digital inkjet print

*Nani with Wall (1)*, 1948  
Silver gelatin print

*Nani with Wall (2)*, 1948  
Silver gelatin print

*Nani in White Shirwani (1)*, 2017  
Digital inkjet print

*Nani in White Shirwani (2)*, 2017  
Digital inkjet print

*Legs (self-portrait as mystery child)*, 2017  
Digital print on adhesive vinyl

*Nani with Jinnah Hat*, 2017  
Digital inkjet print

Courtesy of the artist

*Dear Nani* is a project that utilizes found family photos demonstrating an act of gender play between husband and wife in the newly realized nation of Pakistan in 1948. By presenting these images and accompanying narrative I aim to confront readings informed by a Western feminist and colonialist gaze. While these photos occupy a particular moment in the history, culture, and society in which they were made, they also show a disconnection between generations of a single family.

- EXPLORE
- The role of fiction: How when studying family photographs that cannot answer all her questions,

Naqvi scripts a conversation between herself and her grandmother;

- The act of reinterpreting: How in photographing herself the artist investigates her own subject position, situating herself within and testing the same postcolonial and feminist methods she applies when looking at photographs of her grandmother.

## ANNIE KATSURA ROLLINS

**Immaterial Remains**, 2017

*Shadow Ghost Box 1*, 2017  
Wood, fabric and leather  
Video: 22 sec.

Can you archive a shadow?

*Shadow Ghost Box 2*, 2017  
Wood, glass, paper and watercolor

Is preservation death or perpetuity?

*Shadow Ghost Box 3*, 2017  
Wood, glass, paper and watercolor

Are shadows traces or are traces shadows?

*Shadow Ghost Box 4*, 2017  
Wood, glass, paper and watercolor

Is the ghost of a shadow all that can remain?

Courtesy of the artist

As the practice of Chinese shadow puppetry languishes, the traditional shadow puppets are dying by the thousands: neglected to ruin, strung up, misunderstood or framed in permanent silence in the name of 'preservation'. Soon these static shadow bodies will be the only traces of the living form that remain. With *Immaterial Remains* I aim to capture a glimpse of this ghostly Chinese shadow puppet future.

- EXPLORE
- What is revealed and what is concealed when the boxes are front- or back-lit? When are the puppets viewed as artefacts on display? When is their capacity for 'liveness' activated?
  - The gallery as a site of preservation. What does it mean for tradition to be put on display? Is it then frozen in history or does the gallery space open up future possibilities for the 'dying' art form?

## NAGHMEH SHARIFI

**Peuple dilué**, 2016-2017  
10 inks and watercolors on paper

Courtesy of the artist

With *Peuple dilué* I investigate transient identities, those that are fluid and born from impermanence. Initially inspired by the Romani population of the Shutka region in Macedonia, I explore the notion of a people versus a nation and, taking a step beyond region specificity, consider the body as a universal form in suspension against a background absent of depth and dimension.

- EXPLORE
- The different readings of dilution: dilution as a property of ink, as a way to describe mixing and a change in properties, as a denigratory statement, or as a weakening of purity;
  - The ways of representing community and individuals in flux.



## Leonard & Bina Ellen Art Gallery

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